General Assembly

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Fifty-sixth session
Agenda item 32

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[*without reference to a Main Committee (A/56/L.44/Rev.2 and Corr.1)*]

56/262. Multilingualism

The General Assembly,

Recognizing that the United Nations pursues multilingualism as a means of promoting, protecting and preserving diversity of languages and cultures globally,

Also recognizing that genuine multilingualism promotes unity in diversity and international understanding,

Recalling its resolution 47/135 of 18 December 1992, by which it adopted the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities, and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,[1] in particular article 27 concerning the rights of persons belonging to ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities,

Recalling also its resolutions 2 (I) of 1 February 1946, 2480 B (XXIII) of 21 December 1968, 50/11 of 2 November 1995, 52/23 of 25 November 1997, 54/64 of 6 December 1999, 55/258 of 14 June 2001, and 56/64 B and 56/242 of 24 December 2001,

I

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General,[2] and recalls the actions suggested therein;

2. *Also takes note* of the appointment of a coordinator for multilingualism;

3. *Notes with satisfaction* the willingness of the Secretariat to encourage staff members, in formal meetings with interpretation services, to use any of the six official languages of which they have a command;

4. *Stresses* that the employment of staff shall continue to be carried out in strict accordance with Article 101 of the Charter of the United Nations and in line with the relevant provisions of General Assembly resolutions;

[1] See resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.

[2] A/56/656.

5. *Also stresses* that the promotion of staff in the Professional and higher categories should be carried out in strict accordance with Article 101 of the Charter and in line with the provisions of resolution 2480 B (XXIII) and the relevant provisions of resolution 55/258;

6. *Encourages* United Nations staff members to continue to use actively existing training facilities to acquire and enhance proficiency in one or more official languages of the United Nations;

7. *Takes note* of the overhaul of the recruitment system undertaken by the Secretariat within the context of the Galaxy Project, and requests the Secretariat to ensure that the system becomes effective and operational as soon as practical;

8. *Recalls* its resolution 56/242, in which it requested the Secretary-General to report on the utilization rates of interpretation services and conference facilities at all duty stations with a view to improving interpretation services, and requests the Secretary-General to carry out a comprehensive review of the reasons for holding informal calendar meetings without interpretation;

9. *Also recalls* its resolution 56/64 B, in which it noted the continuing efforts of the Secretary-General to enrich on a multilingual basis the stock of books and journals in the Library, and section V, paragraph 1, of its resolution 56/242, in which it requested the Secretary-General to submit a progress report on the use of information technology, including computerized terminology data banks;

10. *Further recalls* its resolution 56/64 B, and emphasizes the importance of multilingualism in United Nations public relations and information activities;

11. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to it at its fifty-eighth session a comprehensive report on the implementation of its resolutions on multilingualism, including the implications of section I of the present resolution;

II

12. *Welcomes* the decision by the General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization on 17 November 1999 that 21 February should be proclaimed "International Mother Language Day", and calls upon Member States and the Secretariat to promote the preservation and protection of all languages used by peoples of the world;

13. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to it at its fifty-eighth session on the measures that can be taken by Member States and international organizations within the United Nations system in order to strengthen the protection, promotion and preservation of all languages, in particular languages spoken by persons belonging to linguistic minorities and languages facing extinction;

III

14. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-eighth session the item entitled "Multilingualism".

94th plenary meeting
15 February 2002